(a) whether the Government of Nepal has taken a decision to withdraw Nepali citizenship of thousand of people of Indian origin in Nepal;

(b) if so, whether Indian Government propose to intervene in the matter and take up the issue with the Nepal Government; and

(c) if so, by when and Government's reaction in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) On July 23, 2001, the Hon. Supreme Court of Nepal declard 30,000 of the 34,090 citizenship certificates issued under the aegis of a one man Commission appointed in 1997 by the then Government of Nepal as invalid. These Citizenship Certificates issued to applicants in 20 Districts of the Nepal terai belt were declared null and void on grounds of procedural deficiencies. Mr. Khum Bahadur Khadka, Home Minister of His Majesty's Government of Nepal, has informed the House of Representatives on August 05, 2001 that the Government would follow the right procedures and provide the certificates, within one month, to all those people whose citizenship papers were revoked by the Supreme Court citing procedural mistakes while issuing them. The problem of state-less terai Nepalese is a complex and sensitive issue in Nepal and has remained unresolved for a long time. An attempt to get an amendment incorporated into the Nepal Citizenship Act of 1964 through a Finance Bill earlier this year by the Government of former Prime Minister G.P. Koirala also failed as the Supreme Court declared it to be unconstitutional. Some political parties of Nepal have been advocating that it can be resolved only through an amendment to the Constitution which can be achieved only through discussions and political consensus within Nepal.

(b) and (c) Not applicable.

Retention of Indians in UAE jails

2642. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indians who got general amnesty are still in the UAE Jails; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, and whether Government have taken any steps to repatriate them to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.